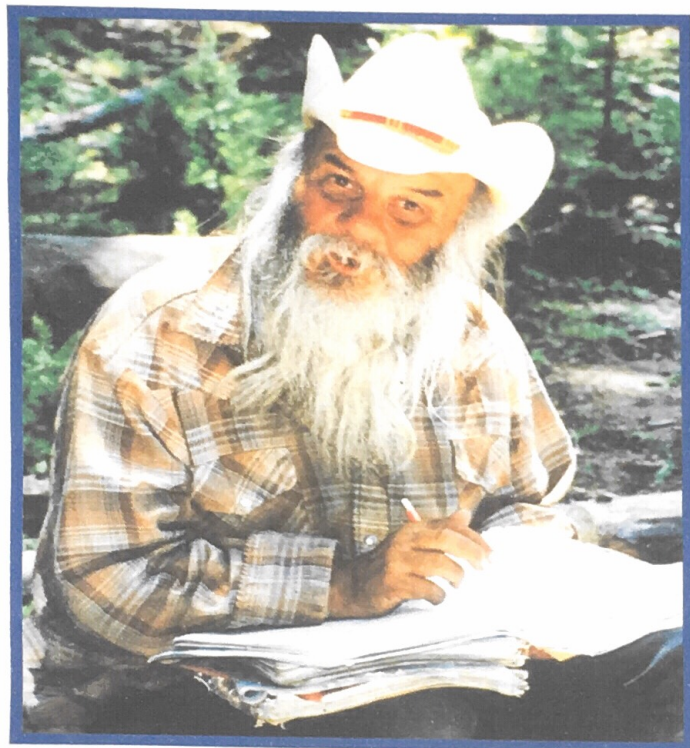


Rainbow Family

Life Stories



by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.
Scanned in 2018.
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FEATHER "Herstory"

- Jodey's Introduction

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[In our society, it is common for a woman to marry or have a relationship with a man from a higher social level than she is. In Rainbow the opposite often happens—men link up with women from a higher social level. This is true of Jay Sun and Feather. Feather is from an upper middle class family and Jay Sun is from a working class family that went to tremendous effort to make sure that he would have all the middle class social advantages.]

Most Americans don't like to think about social class questions. They prefer to think of themselves as all "middle class." Yet social class tension is a good deal of the reason for strain in large groups—like Rainbow Gatherings—or in individual relationships like Jay Sun and Feather, in spite of all the middle class social skills that Jay Sun has acquired.

Although the feelings Americans have about social class are often vague, the tensions are sharp and clear between different races or between males and females. To Feather it seemed that Jay Sun as a male had a leadership role in Rainbow that she shared in only by being married to him. "I will always love Jay Sun," she says, "but I got tired of being the hind end of Jay Sun and Feather."

After Feather's daughter Tracy (or Grasshopper) became deeply involved in high school social life and Shawn, Feather's son by Jay Sun, was in grade school and Jay Sun was always away at work, Feather was left lonely and bored in back-country communities like Luna, New Mexico, and Alpine, Arizona. Although her standard of living in these places was higher than when she lived in Wheeler's Ranch, a California hippie commune, Wheeler's had people of similar interests to her. Feather found most of the women where she lived in Southwestern New Mexico and the

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adjacent areas of Arizona to be much too conservative to be close companions. The time was just too long between Rainbow Gatherings where she saw most of her really close friends. And because of Jayson's vasectomy, she was not going to have any more children to occupy her time if she stayed with Jayson. When Jayson

and Feather had tried to stay with people of like mind at Rainbow Farm, that was impossible because the damp Oregon climate inflamed Jayson's war wound. In a situation like this with so many factors beyond anyone's direct control - basically cultural problems - it was only a matter of time until an incident would happen that would start the breakup of the relationship. Of course like most people in such a situation, Jayson and Feather interpreted what happened in terms of each other's personalities.

One thing that is clear from Feather's life story is that she did a great deal of important work on the gatherings while she was with Jayson. Since she has left Jayson, she has been one of the main people working on the Michigan and California Gatherings and two Southwest Regional Gatherings. She has also done work to support American Indian causes.]